

MEDICAL DEVICE MANUFACTURER FINDS SOLUTIONS THROUGH LEAN

ABOUT CULVER TOOL & ENGINEERING, INC. Culver Tool & Engineering, Inc. was established in 1950 and grew to become a leader in the automotive broaching industry. Between 1989 and 2011, the company transformed itself into one of the largest contract spinal rod manufacturers in the orthopedic industry. The company continued to provide service to the broaching community for many years, but in 2013 Culver Tool began marketing itself as CTE Solutions to solidify its image as a multi-faceted orthopedic solutions provider. Based in Plymouth, Indiana, with around 55 employees, CTE Solutions now supplies the highest quality of instrumentation and implants in the market.

THE CHALLENGE. CTE Solutions was struggling to meet its on-time delivery goals. The company had experienced tremendous yet unexpected growth that produced large amounts of work-in-process and long lead times. While it was successfully completing individual jobs, CTE Solutions lacked an effective method for moving to the next part of the process. The company reached out to Purdue MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, for assistance.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Purdue MEP provided on-site Lean manufacturing training for CTE Solutions, including value stream mapping, 5S/visual workplace, quick changeover, and cellular manufacturing. The company also selected staff to participate in Six Sigma certification and utilized Purdue MEP experts for Lean consulting. Deven Berger, the Continuous Improvement manager for CTE Solutions, noted that the best part about implementing a Lean mentality was the reaction from all the employees.

"When Purdue MEP first came in and explained what Lean manufacturing was and used the Lean airplane simulation to demonstrate how Lean manufacturing could change things, we all were stunned and very excited," Berger said. The company applied Lean strategies to reduce Work-In-Process (WIP) inventory while increasing on-time delivery and total production capacity. CTE Solutions experienced a 19 percent increase in growth over the previous year, and Berger is excited for what the future holds. He is taking several public Purdue MEP courses to bring new skills to CTE Solutions and continue to help with different projects.

"We have improved in so many different areas, it has become hard to keep up," said Berger. "The improvements made have created a much more relaxed environment with tons of smiles." CTE Solutions plans to build a new facility to meet the additional growth.

"Working with Purdue MEP has been quite the blessing. We were at a point in time where we were ready for change, but were not quite sure how to implement it. Purdue MEP has been a tremendous part of our transformation this past year and will be in this coming year as we continue to grow."

-Deven Berger, Continuous Improvement Manager

RESULTS



Increased on-time delivery to 85%, up from **54%**



Achieved a **29%** growth rate, up from 10% the previous year



Building **1** new facility



Expanded total production capacity

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